CONSTITUTION

AND

BY-LAWS

OF

ZION'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

LUNENBURG, N. S.

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Zion's Evangelical Lutheran
Church (Lunenburg, N. S.)
Constitution and by-laws

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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

OF

ZION'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

LUNENBURG, N. S.

PREAMBLE

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

We, members of the body of Christ, desiring to manifest that inner unity which we have with one another in the common confession, defence and maintenance, of our faith, and in joint efforts for the performance of our Christian stewardship in extending the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, unite in the adoption of the Constitution hereunto following.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE ONE

Title and Incorporation

1. The name and title of this congregation shall be Zion's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.
2. This congregation shall be incorporated.
3. The Church Council shall be the Board of Trustees of this corporation.

ARTICLE TWO

Doctrinal Basis

(a) This congregation receives and holds the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, and as the only infallible rule and standard of faith and practice, according to which all doctrines and teachers are to be judged.

(b) This congregation accepts the three ecumenical creeds—namely, the Apostles, the Nicene, and the Athanasian—as important testimonies drawn from the Holy Scriptures, and rejects all errors which they condemn.

(c) This congregation receives and holds the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the faith and doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, founded upon the Word of God and acknowledges

all churches that sincerely hold and faithfully confess the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession to be entitled to the name of Evangelical Lutheran.

(d) This congregation recognizes the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalkald Articles, the Large and Small Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord as in the harmony of one and the same pure Scriptural faith.

To this Doctrinal Basis all instruction in the Church, the school and the family shall be conformed.

ARTICLE THREE

Synodical Connection

This congregation shall be maintained in organic connection with a constituent Synod of The United Lutheran Church in America, on the territory of which it is located; and shall labor in the Lord's kingdom in common with all other congregations of said Synod and others constituting The United Lutheran Church in America.

ARTICLE FOUR

Membership

1. This congregation shall consist of the pastor, and other members of the Church of Christ who have been baptized and admitted to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and who unite as one communion under the covenants and obligations of this Constitution, accepting the same and performing the duties it enjoins; also such baptized members of their households as have not reached the age of separate responsibility but are subjects to their control as parents, guardians or sponsors.

2. It is the duty of all members of this congregation to be steadfast in their baptismal covenant. If they are parents or guardians it is their duty early to bring the children under their care within the same, presenting them for holy baptism; to bring such children up in the nuture and admonition of the Lord; to instruct or cause them to be instructed in Biblical knowledge and church consciousness in the home and school; to see to it that they are early brought into attendance upon the catechetical instruction by the pastor, and in due time prepared for the rite of confirmation and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

That all may grow in grace and the knowledge of God, members are to give diligence to the study of the Holy Scriptures, the reading of devout literature which accords with the Scriptures, and faithful attendance upon the services of God's house and the preaching of the Word, always seeking

the light and aid of the Holy Spirit and all other needful gifts by fervent prayer by self-examination, by confession, and absolution. Confirmed members shall regularly receive the Lord's Supper.

They shall strive to be temperate in all things, to love and aid one another, each other and especially the needy and distressed in every relation; and, while they have regard to the household of faith above all, they shall care for the souls and bodies of men everywhere. They shall regularly and faithfully avail themselves of the public worship, and not become lax in the sincere practice of family and private devotion. They shall diligently seek to avoid all false teachers and strange doctrines; heartily love, reverence, pray for and sustain faithful ministers; and in all things seek to be conformed to the mind and example of our most blessed Lord and Saviour.

Every confirmed member, as a good steward of the manifold gifts of God, shall on the first day of each week lay by in store, as God has prospered him or her, an offering to be placed upon the altar of the Lord for the support and promotion of the work of the kingdom at home and abroad. unconfirmed children shall be taught early to contribute likewise.

ARTICLE FIVE

Voters

Every communicant member of the congregation, not under Church censure, who regularly receives the Lords Supper, at least once per year and systematically (weekly, if possible) contributes in accordance with its plans for local support and general benevolence, as God has prospered him, shall be entitled to participate actively in all congregational meetings and to vote at all its elections.

ARTICLE SIX

Meetings

1. Congregational meetings shall be held regularly, as the congregation may determine by By-Law. Special meetings may also be provided for.

2. At congregational meetings all matters concerning the welfare of the congregation may be determined, including the filling of the various offices in the congregations; matters pertaining to good order and conformity of ceremony to the usages prevailing in The United Lutheran Church in America; the purchase, disposal or alteration of the property of the congregation, and the like.

3. The congregation shall have the power to appoint special committees with definite or general instructions; and to authorize the organization of approved societies or special associations within itself, subjecting the same

to the control of the Church Council, and responsible to it for all undertakings.

4. The congregation, at the annual meeting, shall elect from the communicant members of the congregation in good standing and of voting age, a lay delegate who shall, together with the pastor, represent the congregation during that year at all meetings of the Synod and of the Conference to which the congregation belongs, and submit a report, as delegate to the congregation assembled for service as soon as may be after the adjournment of the Synod or of the Conference; and the Council shall arrange for and provide to pay his and the pastor's regular expenses to be in full attendance upon such meetings. The congregation may also elect an alternate to take the place of the regular delegate in his absence.

ARTICLE SEVEN

The Pastor

1. The pastor of this congregation shall be regularly installed, and must have been obligated, at his ordination, or investiture as a Lutheran minister, to the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, namely, the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds, the Unaltered Augusburg Confession, the Apology, the Smalkald Articles, the Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord. He shall solemnly promise to perform the duties of his office in conformity with these confessions as a correct exhibition of the faith and doctrines of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, founded upon the Holy Scriptures. He shall be, or at its next regular convention, become a member of the Synod with which the congregation is united. He shall faithfully carry out the provisions of this Constitution.

2. The pastor shall be the teacher and spiritual guide of the congregation and its members. To this end he shall preach the Word, administer the sacraments, conform the manner of conducting public worship to the accepted practice of The United Lutheran Church in America, using such books of worship and instruction as have been accepted and approved by The United Lutheran Church in America and the Synod to which this congregation belongs. He shall care for all the people of the congregation as individuals and as a congregation in common faith and harmonious interest with all other members and congregations of the Synod and of The United Lutheran Church in America. He shall impart catechetical instruction regularly; with the advice and consent of the Church Council he shall confirm those who have been duly instructed and give satisfactory evidence that they are earnestly desirous of being faithful followers of Christ. He shall perform the marriage ceremony in accordance with the laws of God and of the state; visit and minister to the sick and infirm; bury the dead; install regularly elected members of the Church Council, and, with the Council,

administer discipline. He shall supervise all schools and auxiliary organizations of the congregation, and promote the upbuilding of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in the community, in the homeland and abroad. He shall co-operate with the agencies and officers of the Synod in every way to educate the people to increased liberality for the causes of benevolence recommended by the Synod or supported by The United Lutheran Church in America. He shall seek to impart all information concerning the work and problems as they arise before the Church; and use his best endeavor to stimulate piety in the individual and family life of the people, as well as a knowledge of the Church and her work by the circulation of the literature of the Church. He shall labor to prevent all deadness and fanaticism, all schism, heresy, separation and alienation in the congregation; and, in private and public, set an example of unfeigned piety, sound judgment, and propriety. He shall maintain the pulpit in full harmony with the faith confessed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

3. The pastor shall keep an accurate record of his ministerial acts in the congregation, in a book provided by and to remain the property of the congregation; and he shall annually report these statistics to the Synod or to an official appointed by the Synod for that purpose.

4. When members of this congregation remove into the bounds of another congregation of the same faith, the pastor shall urge such members to connect themselves with the congregation into whose territory they have removed. He shall immediately notify the pastor of said other congregation of such removal; and, upon application, furnish certificates of transfer to such as are entitled to the same.

5. It shall be the duty of the pastor to preside at all meetings of the congregation and the Church Council, unless he be voluntarily absent or is temporarily unwilling, for special reasons, to preside, in either of which cases he shall have the right of nominating a person from the officers of the Church to take his place pro tempore. No act of the Council or of the congregation shall take effect without his knowledge and his having had opportunity to be heard.

6. When there is a vacancy in the pastorate the Church Council shall at once inform the President of the Synod and solicit his advice. The Council shall also provide for the supply of the pulpit ad interim; they shall nominate, after prayerful examination, a candidate who is eligible according to Paragraph 1 of this Article of the Constitution. One candidate only shall be nominated at one time, to be voted for or against by the electors specified in Article Five, and the election and its returns shall be under the care of judges appointed by the Church Council. The election shall be by ballot.

7. When a pastor has been elected by a majority of the voters present, a written statement of this fact, signed by the officers of the congregation, shall be sent him, and this shall constitute his call and must specify the support which the congregation will guarantee him.

8. If serious accusation be lodged against a pastor before the Church Council in writing over the signatures of five voting members in the congregation, the Council shall confer with him, endeavor to obviate all just cause of complaint, and seek to reconcile the matter; nor shall any further steps be taken until all proper efforts to this end on the part of the Church Council have been exhausted. If, in the judgment of the Church Council, upon hearing of evidence, at which hearing the pastor shall have full right to present his cause by witnesses and by the examination of witnesses, a prima facie case has been made out against the pastor, it shall report its findings in writing to the President of the Synod, specifying the charges founded on the subscribed testimony of at least two credible witnesses. If the Church Council shall ignore an accusation regularly brought by five voting members of the congregation, said members may in like manner present their charges to the President of the Synod.

ARTICLE EIGHT

The Church Council

1. The Church Council, charged with the administration of the temporal and spiritual affairs of the congregation, shall consist of the pastor and eight deacons.

2. Any male voting member of the congregation is eligible to the office of deacon, provided he is a regular communicant, contributor, and of good and established repute for personal character, wisdom and fidelity.

3. A Deacon is not to succeed himself until the expiration of one year.

4. Deacons are primarily the executive aids of the pastor in the work belonging to the congregation for the promotion of the cause of the Kingdom of Christ and the salvation of souls; therefore, aside from such duties as are from time to time assigned to them by the congregation or by the pastor, their regular duties are defined as follows:

They shall see to it that the services of God's house be held at the proper times, especially on the Lord's Day and the Festival Days of the Church, and conducted in accordance with the Order of the Church; that the pure Word of God is preached as the Church confesses it and only by those duly authorized according to the Constitution; that provision be made for the Christian instruction of the young and all requiring it; that strict discipline be maintained, the erring admonished and impenitent offenders excluded from the communion of the Church; that the property of the congregation be cared for, and all that relates to its wordly affairs properly administered. They shall plan and provide proper means for the systematic and regular collection and disbursement of all moneys for the welfare of the congregation, the maintenance of the property, salaries, the relief of the poor,

and all Christian beneficence, especially the apportionments required by the Synod and the Church at large for the conduct of its work.

They shall assist the pastor in the care of the sick and the needy, in the cultivation of harmony among the members, and in the promotion of the general welfare of the congregation; and they shall see to it that the house of God is not diverted to any uses alien to it character.

They shall not be unmindful that while holiness of life and conversation is required of all who name the Name of Christ, it is espcielly incumbent upon those who have been called to be office-bearers in His Church to show themselves in all things by word and example, a pattern of good works.

5. The Church Council shall meet at regular intervals (monthly, if possible) as may be determined in the By-Laws; and shall elect from among its members a Secretary, who shall record all its proceedings in a book especially provided for that purpose.

6. When deemed necessary, the Council may elect and provide for the proper compensation of a Financial Secretary for the congregation.

7. All salaries, not otherwise provided for by the congregation, shall be fixed and payment provided for by the Church Council.

8. Should a member of the Church Council, other than the pastor, be charged with neglect of his official duties, and after proper investigation by the Council be found guilty, and after admonition does not amend, he shall be deposed from his office should a two-thirds majority of the Council so vote; and an election for the unexpired term shall be held by the Council. Should a vacancy occur by death or resignation, an election shall be held to fill the same for the unexpired term.

ARTICLE NINE

The Treasurer

1. The Church Council shall elect from among the members in good standing, a Treasurer for the term of two years. He shall receive all moneys, keep proper accounts, and make all payments for the congregation upon orders issued by the Church Council. He shall make a regular (at least quarterly) detailed statement in writing to the Church Council of the conditions of the finances of the congregation, or as the Council may request; and at the regular annual meeting of the congregation he shall render an accurate account, duly audited, of all moneys received and payments made. Without regular orders he shall make no payments. He shall give security in an amount to be fixed by the Council.

2. Should he fail to attend to, or grow remiss in the performance of his official duties, and not amend after admonition he shall be deposed from the treasurership on the majority vote of the Church Council, and his successor for the unexpired term shall be elected by the Council.

ARTICLE TEN

Discipline

1. The congregation is not only to acknowledge the obligations of God's law as a guide of life, and a corrector of evil, but is faithfully to use it in discipline for these ends. The discipline of the Church must be purely moral and spiritual, and in no case can pass beyond the withholding of her recognition, fellowship, and communion from offenders.

2. Violation of the divine commands should be followed by instructions, warnings and exhortation by a member to whom the wrong is known, or by pastor, first privately, then before witnesses in accordance with the directions of Christ (Matt. 18). This failing of its proper effect, the case shall be laid before the Church, as represented in the Church Council; and if the offender persistently refuses to hear the Church, he shall be suspended from the communion until there be credible evidence of true penitence and reformation. Acts of discipline and the publication of them, shall require the concurrence of the pastor and the Council, who, by the authority of the Church and in its name, shall examine charges brought by reliable witnesses against the conduct of members. The charges against a member shall be given in writing over the signature of the person or persons preferring them; he shall be furnished a copy, and is entitled to be present through the whole actual procedure against him, and has the right of being heard and producing testimony in his own defence. The exclusion and the restoration shall be publicly announced. Appeals from the decision in the discipline of the congregation shall be referred in accordance with the Constitution of the Synod with which it is connected.

ARTICLE ELEVEN

The Seal

1, The seal of this congregation presents the open bible with the legend 'Lux mundi verbum Dei' encircled with the words, "Seal of Zion's evangelical Lutheran Church, Lunenburg, N. S.

2. The Secretary of the Church Council shall be the custodian of the seal of the corporation.

ARTICLE TWELVE

By-Laws and Amendments

1. By-Laws, not in conflict with the letter or spirit of this Constitution, may be made by the congregation, to provide an order of business; to fix the

time and place for announcing and holding congregational meetings and elections, and the way of conducting both; to determine the proportion which shall constiute a quorum; to fix the length of time of service of the Church Council; to fix the details of procedure in the discipline of members; to regulate the making and changing of the By-Laws themselves; and in general to conduct all things the principles and methods of which are defined in the Constitution but the details of which are undetermined.

2. Article Two (subject, Doctrinal Basis) of this Constitution shall not be altered or amended by this congregation.

3. Articles of this Constitution providing for synodical relation shall not be amended unless said amendments have been first submitted to the President of the Synod with which the congregation is connected, and have received his approval.

4. This Constitution, except as provided in paragraph 2 and 3 of this Article, may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a regular annual meeting of the congregation, provided that the proposed amendment be moved and presented in writing at the preceding annual meetinng by at least six members in good standing, and that the same has been publicly announced to the congregation at its services on two or more Sundays prior to said annual meeting when action is to be taken.

5. Everything in any By-Laws, resolution or enactment of the congregation, differing from or in conflict with this Constitution, is hereby superseded and repealed.

BY-LAWS

SECTION I

Congregational Meetings

1. The regular congregational meeting shall be held annually on the 2nd Monday of January.

2. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or by the Church Council, and shall be called by the Council upon the written request of twelve voting members in good standing, specifying the purpose for such meeting.

3. All congregational meetings, regular and special, shall be announced at the public services of at least two Sundays previous to such meeting, by the pastor; or, in case of a vacancy in the pastorate, by a supply pastor.

4. At such annual meeting reports of the Pastor, the Secretary, the Treasurer and of the various organizations, schools and associations within the congregation shall be submitted in writing.

5. Any number of voting members of the congregation present at such meeting may transact the required business.

SECTION II

Members

1. Upon recommendation of the pastor, new members shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present in a meeting of the Church Council.

2. The names of newly elected members shall be publicly announced at a service succeeding their election.

3. Letters of membership transfer or of good standing shall be issued only upon approval by a majority vote of the Church Council present in meeting.

SECTION III

The Church Council

1. Except the pastor, members of the Church Council shall be elected at the annual congregational meeting, by a majority of the votes cast, to serve four years. At the first election, however, under this Constitution and By-Laws, two deacons shall be elected for four years; two for three years; two for two years and two for one year.

2. All members properly elected or re-elected by the congregation shall be duly installed by the pastor at the public service next succeeding their election or as soon thereafter as possible.

3. All elections of officers shall be by ballot, and the result duly recorded by the Secretary.

4. The Church Council shall hold regular meetings on the first Tuesday evening of each month for the transaction of the affairs of the congregation. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

5. Special meetings of the Church Council may be called by the pastor, and shall be called by him upon the written request of three members of the Council.

6. For the purpose of administering the discipline provided in the Constitution the Church Council shall have power to cite any member of the congregation to answer charges brought or to give testimony, as the case may require.

7. The following shall constitute the Order of Business:

1. Prayer.
2. Roll Call.
3. Action on Excuses for Absence.
4. Reading of Minutes.
5. Report of Treasurer.
6. Reception of Petitions and Communications.
7. Reports of Standing Committees.
8. Reports of Special Committees.

9. Other Official Reports, if any.
10. Unfinished Business.
11. New Business.
12. Adjournment, with Prayer.

SECTION IV

Standing Committees

1. Unless otherwise ordained by the congregation in annual meeting, the Church Council, at its first meeting succeeding the annual meeting of the congregation, shall appoint from its own or from the voting membership of the congregation in good standing as many standing committees as the local and general interests of the Church may require.

2. The duties of all standing committees, not otherwise defined, shall be fixed by the Church Council, to whom they shall regularly report, from whom they shall receive needed instructions and by whom all their acts shall be subject to review. They shall serve for one year. A member of the Church Council shall be chairman, and the pastor shall have a voice and vote in all standing committees.

3. Standing committees shall meet (monthly) at a time determined upon by the committee. Special meetings may be called by the chairman, the Church Council, or the pastor.

4. There shall be a Committee on Church Property. This committee shall provide for the proper care and protection of all the property of the congregation, and see that the same is kept in good repair. It shall from time to time report such alterations or improvements of the church property as it may deem necessary; and, upon authorization and provision of the necessary funds by the Council, shall supervise all such alterations and improvements.

5. There shall be a Committee on Literature and Music. It shall be the duty of this committee to seek the introduction of proper church papers and books of family devotion into all the homes of the congregation; to examine into and recommend the use of approved lessons, literature and music in the Bible (Sunday) school; to provide and care for Books of Worship for the congregation, as approved by The United Lutheran Church in America; and, in consultation with the pastor and chorister, to provide proper music for the use of the choir. For this purpose the committee shall regularly report to the Council the appropriations necessary for the supply and maintenance of these departments of the congregation's activities.

6. There shall be a Finance Committee, of which the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary, shall be members ex officio. Its duty shall be to present annually to the Church Council, at the meeting prior to the annual congregational meeting, a detailed maximum budget or estimate of necessary expenditures to be met by the congregation for the succeeding year; and to

devise and put into effect ways and means to gather systematically from all the members the needed funds. It shall audit the accounts of the Treasurer, and, in conjunction with him, invest the funds of the congregation.

7. There shall be a Committee on Benevolence, of which the pastor, the Treasurer, and the Financial Secretary shall be members ex officio. The duty of this committee shall be primarily to disseminate information among the members of the congregation concerning the various benevolent operations of the Church and their needs, and to promote greater interest in the same. The committee shall devise ways and means for the systematic ingathering of the offerings of the congregation, for benevolence, and constantly endeavor to bring every member to a full realization of his or her responsibilities to support liberally and regularly the work of Christ's kingdom. The committee shall also look after the poor and needy in the congregation, and provide promptly necessary relief.

SECTION V

Bible (Sunday) School

1. A Bible (Sunday) school shall be maintained by the congregation for the training of its members, especially children and young people, in the knowledge and practice of the religion held and confessed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The pastor shall have supervision of such school, to advise in all its departments when ever necessary.

2. The officers and teachers of such school, together with the pastor, shall constitute an association for the goverment and promotion of the work of the school.

3. The officers and teachers of the school shall be such persons, approved by the pastor, as are members of the Lutheran Church, preferably of this congregation, and who accept the laws and regulations ordained by the association and approved by the Church Council for the government of the school.

4. There shall be a superintendent of the school. He shall have charge of the discipline of the school, the assignment of teachers, the regulation of classes and the general promotion of Christian education, orderliness and harmony. In the direction of the school and its affairs he shall consult and co-operate with the pastor. He shall be a member of the congregation, in good standing, and his election shall be concurred in by the Church Council.

Assistants to the superintendent may be elected under the same conditions, if deemed necessary.

5. The election of the superintendent and other officers of the school shall be held annually, in the month of December which election shall be publicly announced to the school at least two Sundays prior to the meeting. The officers and teachers of the school shall be the voters at such election,

which election shall be by a majority vote of those present. The names of the persons elected shall be reported to the Church Council for confirmation, the same being requisite to complete the election.

6. Text-books, library books, lesson leaves and music for the school shall be selected by the association in consulation with and introduced only upon the approval of the pastor and the Committees on Literature and Printing and Music appointed by the Church Council.

7. The truth of the great Festivals of the Church, a right missionary spirit, and the loving care for all the destitute and needy shall be fostered in the school. Liberality to the cause of Christ shall be taught and encouraged, and provision be made for the systematic and regular contributions of all members of the school.

8. A Treasurer, duly elected, shall receive and account for all contributions of the school. He shall not pay out any funds of the school except by order of the association; and contributions for any special cause shall not be diverted to other use. His accounts shall be submitted to and audited by the Finance Committee appointed by the Church Council.

9. The association shall have authority to make any necessary regulations for itself and for the school provided they are not in conflict with the Constitution and By-Laws of the congregation. Such rules and regulations, before being put into effect, shall be reported to and confirmed by the Church Council.

SECTION VI

Application of Moneys Received

1. Contributions received for benevolence shall be forwarded to the Synodical Treasurer in monthly installments; and no such contributions shall be diverted to any other use; nor shall any contributions given for any specific purpose within the congregation be diverted from such use.

2. Should the contributions for benevolence in any year be insufficient to pay the apportionments due for the work of the Synod and of The United Lutheran Church in America, the Church Council shall provide for and cause the balance to be paid from the general fund of the congregation.

SECTION VII

Amendments

No alterations or amendments to these By-Laws shall be made except they be presented in writing, to the Church Council and read at a public service prior to the meeting at which they are to be acted upon and adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present.

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